

Message Text

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SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: CANADIAN/AMERICAN COMMITTEE REPORT

1. THE REPORT ON CANADIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS ISSUED BY THE CANADIAN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE, JOINTLY SPONSORED BY THE C.D. HOWE RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF MONTREAL AND THE NATIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON, HAS RECEIVED HEAVY MEDIA PLAY IN CANADA.

2. BOTH PRINT MEDIA AND TELEVISION NEWSCASTS HAVE DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE TIME AND SPACE TO EXCERPTS OF THE REPORT CARRIED BY THE CANADIAN PRESS, THE NATIONAL WIRE SERVICE. CANADIAN JOURNALISTS BASED IN WASHINGTON, SUCH AS FRANK RUTTER OF THE OTTAWA JOURNAL AND PAUL WHITELAW, HAVE ALSO FULLY REPORTED THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT. COVERAGE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE IN THE FRANCH AS WELL AS IN THE ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS.

3. REPORTING GENERALLY HAS BEEN STRAIGHTFORWARD, HIGHLIGHTING THE CONCLUSION OF THE COMMITTEE THAT CANADIAN-U.S. RELATIONS WILL BE TENSE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE WITH LITTLE PROSPECT FOR SHORT-TERM RESOLUTION. MOST ACCOUNTS POINT OUT THAT BOTH CANADA AND THE U.S. ARE EMBARKING ON NEW POLICY DIRECTIONS TO MEET CHANGING INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS. THE U.S. IS ADJUSTING TO A CHANGING ROLE IN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS. CANADA IS

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ASSERTING A NATIONAL IDENTITY.

4. GOC REACTION HAS BEEN LIMITED TO REMARKS BY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER ALLAN MACEACHEN (SEE OTTAWA 3057) WHO SPOKE TO REPORTERS AS HE LEFT OTTAWA FOR NEW YORK ON JULY 27 AND ON ARRIVAL. MACEACHEN SAID THAT HE SAW NOTHING "UNHEALTHY" ABOUT THE STRESS AND STRAINS REPORTED BY THE COMMITTEE. HE WENT ON TO SAY "... AS WE GROW IN CANADA, AND BECOME MORE SIGNIFICANT ECONOMICALLY, TENSIONS ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE. THEY ARE NOT LIKELY TO DISAPPEAR. THE IMPORTANT THINK IS HOW WE HANDLE THESE PROBLEMS". COMMENT: MACEACHEN HAS TENDED TO PLAY DOWN STRESSES IN U.S.-CANADIAN RELATIONS AND HE HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT HE FEELS NEWS REPORTS GOING BACK TO REPORTING OF THE "PORTER INCIDENT" LAST DECEMBER, WERE TOO PESSIMISTIC. IN JUNE, HE SAID THAT HE REJECTED THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE RELATIONSHIP IS "DETERIORATING" BUT HE HAS ALWAYS ADMITTED THAT THERE ARE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES. HIS REACTION TO THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT APPEARS TO REFLECT A LESS ROSY ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP THAN HE HAS EXHIBITED IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS.

5. FULL MEDIA REACTION CABLE FOLLOWS BY SEPTTEL.
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